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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/995,971

Applicant(s)

WILLIAMS, L. LLOYD

Examiner

Olisa Anwah

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 September 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-62 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 16-51,55 and 63-79 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4-7,52-54 and 56-60 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3,8-15,61 and 62 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1, 6, 52, 53, and 56-59 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Petrunka et al, U.S. Patent No. 5,991,369 (hereinafter Petrunka) in view of Bartholomew et al, U.S. Patent No. 6,215,858 (hereinafter Bartholomew).

Regarding claim 1, Petrunka teaches a method for providing direct access to a voice mail system (VMS) hosting a voice mail box associated with a service subscriber, the method comprising steps of:

formulating a call set-up message for initiating the establishment of a call connection directly to the VMS without first attempting to complete a call to the service subscriber in response to a request for direct access to the voice mail box by a requesting party; and issuing the call setup message into a

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common channel signaling (CCS) network to initiate the establishment of the call connection directly between the requesting party and the voice mail box of the service subscriber (see unit 434 from Figure 4 and column 4).

Further regarding claim 1, Petrunka discloses the call set-up message includes a called party's number, voice mail box system number, and caller's number (see unit 434 from Figure 4 and column 4). The Examiner would also like to point out that similar to Applicant's claims, the call set-up message of Petrunka is issued by a service switch (see column 4). With further respect to claim 1, nowhere does Petrunka explicitly indicate that the message is issued in the format reserved for a redirected call set-up message issued by a service switching point in response to an uncompleted call to the service subscriber. Regardless, Bartholomew discloses this limitation (see lines 1 through 25 of column 17). For this reason, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the call set-up message of Petrunka, wherein the message is of the format reserved for a redirected call set-up message issued by a service switching point in response to an uncompleted call to the service subscriber as taught by Bartholomew. This modification would have improved the system's flexibility by

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utilizing AIN technology as suggested by both Petrunka (see column 4) and Bartholomew (see column 7).

Regarding claim 6, Petrunka teaches a method of providing direct access to a voice mail box of a service subscriber to a voice mail system (VMS), the method comprising steps of:

receiving at a call control application, a message sent in response to a request for direct access to the voice mail box by a requesting party;

formulating a call setup message for initiating establishment of a call connection between the requesting party and the VMS without first attempting to complete a call to the service subscriber,

sending the call set-up message into the CCS network to initiate the establishment of the direct call connection (see unit 434 from Figure 4 and column 4).

Further regarding claim 6, Petrunka discloses the call set-up message includes a called party's number, voice mail box system number, and caller's number (see unit 434 from Figure 4 and column 4). The Examiner would also like to point out that similar to Applicant's claims, the call set-up message of Petrunka is issued by a service switch (see column 4). With

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further respect to claim 6, nowhere does Petrunka explicitly indicate that the message is issued in the format reserved for a redirected call set-up message issued by a service switching point in response to an uncompleted call to the service subscriber. Regardless, Bartholomew discloses this limitation (see lines 1 through 25 of column 17). For this reason, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the call set-up message of Petrunka, wherein the message is of the format reserved for a redirected call set-up message issued by a service switching point in response to an uncompleted call to the service subscriber as taught by Bartholomew. This modification would have improved the system's flexibility by utilizing AIN technology as suggested by both Petrunka (see column 4) and Bartholomew (see column 7).

Regarding claim 52, Petrunka teaches a method of providing direct access to a voice mail box of a service subscriber without first attempting to complete a call to the service subscriber comprising:

receiving a request for a direct call connection to the voice mail box of the service subscriber from a requesting party; and

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formulating a call setup message for initiating establishment of the direct call connection between the requesting party and the voice mail box in response to the request for the direct connection to the voice mail box,

sending the call set-up message to initiate the establishment of the direct call connection (see unit 434 from Figure 4 and column 4).

Further regarding claim 52, Petrunka discloses the call set-up message includes a called party's number, voice mail box system number, and caller's number (see unit 434 from Figure 4 and column 4). The Examiner would also like to point out that similar to Applicant's claims, the call set-up message of Petrunka is issued by a service switch (see column 4). With further respect to claim 52, nowhere does Petrunka explicitly indicate that the message is issued in the format reserved for a redirected call set-up message issued by a service switching point in response to an uncompleted call to the service subscriber. Regardless, Bartholomew discloses this limitation (see lines 1 through 25 of column 17). For this reason, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the call set-up message of Petrunka, wherein the message is of the format reserved for a redirected call set-up message issued

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by a service switching point in response to an uncompleted call to the service subscriber as taught by Bartholomew. This modification would have improved the system's flexibility by utilizing AIN technology as suggested by both Petrunka (see column 4) and Bartholomew (see column 7).

Regarding claim 53, see Figure 4 of Petrunka.

Regarding claim 56, see Figure 4 of Petrunka.

Regarding claim 57, see Figure 4 of Petrunka.

Regarding claim 58, see Figure 4 of Petrunka.

Regarding claim 59, see Figure 4 of Petrunka.

3. Claims 2, 4, 7 and 60 are rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Petrunka combined with Bartholomew in further view of Applicant's Admitted Prior Art.

As per claim 2, the combination of Petrunka and Bartholomew does not explicitly teach the CCS network uses signaling system 7 (SS7) protocol, and the steps of formulating a call set-up message further comprises steps of:

instantiating an integrated users digital network-user part (ISUP) initial address message (IAM);

inserting a directory number (DN) of the VMS into a called party number parameter in the IAM; and

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inserting a redirecting number parameter, an original called number parameter, and a redirection information parameter into the IAM, in conformance with an SS7 standard.

However paragraphs 0005 through 0007 of Applicant's specification admits this limitation is well known in the art. As a result, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further modify the combination of Petrunka and Bartholomew with the parameters admitted by Applicant. This modification would have improved the system's flexibility by utilizing AIN technology as suggested by both Petrunka (see column 4) and Bartholomew (see column 7).

Regarding claim 4, nowhere does the combination of Petrunka and Bartholomew discuss inserting a redirecting reason code into a redirection information parameter, the reason code being used by the VMS to select a voice mail prompt to play to the calling party. However paragraphs 0005 through 0007 of Applicant's specification admits this limitation is well known in the art. As a result, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further modify the combination of Petrunka and Bartholomew with the parameter admitted by Applicant. This modification would have improved the

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system's flexibility by utilizing AIN technology as suggested by both Petrunka (see column 4) and Bartholomew (see column 7).

Claim 7 is rejected for the same reasons as claim 2.

Claim 60 is rejected for the same reasons as claim 2.

4. Claim 54 is rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Petrunka combined with Bartholomew in further view of Tov et al, U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0152402 (hereinafter Tov).

Regarding claim 54, the combination of Petrunka and Bartholomew fails to teach receiving the request for a direct connection to the voice mail box comprises receiving an indication that the requesting party selected a click to voice mail option. Yet Tov discloses this limitation (see paragraph 0041). Hence it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further modify the combination of Petrunka and Bartholomew with the user interface disclosed by Tov. This modification would have improved the user's convenience by allowing the voice mailbox to be accessed graphically as suggested by Tov (see Figure 5).

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5. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Petrunka combined with Bartholomew in further view of Russell, Travis. *Signaling System #7* New York: McGraw Hill, 2000 (hereinafter Russell).

With respect to claim 5, the combination of Petrunka and Bartholomew fails to teach inserting a redirecting reason code into a redirection information parameter, the reason code being a default value indicating that the reasons for redirection is unknown or not available. However Russell discloses this limitation (see page 461). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further modify the combination of Petrunka and Bartholomew with the reason code taught by Russell. This modification would have improved the system's user friendliness by allowing for a parameter that provides information as to why the call was diverted and the nature of the call as suggested by Russell (page 496) and Bartholomew (see column 17).

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 3, 8, 61 and 62 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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Response to Arguments

7. Applicant argues Bartholomew does not teach a call set-up message having a format reserved for a redirected call set-up message issued by a service switching point in response to an uncompleted call to the service subscriber. The Examiner respectfully disagrees. Because the data (see lines 10-15 of column 17) provided by the switching system 110 is in response to an uncompleted call to the service subscriber (see lines 55-65 of column 16), Bartholomew teaches the claimed message format.

Applicant further alleges the proposed combination would cause the Operator Services Switch of Petrunka to send the call set-up message towards the voice mail system 39 and **not** towards the services computer 36. The Examiner respectfully disagrees because Petrunka teaches the services computer formulates the call set-up message (see step 438 from Figure 4).

Conclusion

8. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** See MPEP § 706.07(a).

Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

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A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Olisa Anwah whose telephone number is 571-272-7533. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday from 8.30 AM to 6 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Fan Tsang can be reached on 571-272-7547. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 571-273-8300 for regular communications and 571-273-8300 for After Final communications.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 571-272-2600.

O.A.

Olisa Anwah
Patent Examiner
September 26, 2006

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